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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [EG](#) [IS](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPT: DEAL WITH ISRAEL ON SUDANESE REFUGEES STILL
UNDER DISCUSSION

REF: 2006 CAIRO 170

Classified by Acting DCM William R. Stewart for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

11. (C) Despite Israeli press reports on an Israeli-Egyptian deal for Israel to return Sudanese refugees who illegally entered Israel through the Sinai to Egypt, GOE officials deny that such a deal has been concluded. On July 11, MFA Cabinet Advisor for U.S. Affairs Ahmed El Fadly told poloff that the Israelis had requested such an agreement, but that the subject was still "under interagency consideration" in the GOE due to "legal ramifications." MFA Cabinet Advisor for African Affairs Ahmed Abu Zeid reiterated this point to poloff on July 15.

12. (U) Israeli press had reported that, in late June, Israeli Prime Minister Olmert and Egyptian President Mubarak agreed that Israel would deport Sudanese refugees who had illegally crossed into Israel from the Sinai back to Egypt. In turn, Egypt reportedly agreed not to deport the Sudanese back to Sudan, due to humanitarian concerns. Israeli press later reported that implementation of the deal had been delayed due to logistical problems.

13. (SBU) Discussions come in the midst of several incidents of Egyptian security confronting Sudanese refugees attempting to reach Israel, and on top of increased border tensions after Hamas's take-over of the Gaza Strip. Egyptian press reported that Egyptian security forces on July 2 arrested twenty Sudanese attempting to cross into Israel, and on July 4 shot and critically one Sudanese and detained two others attempting to cross the border (septel).

14. (SBU) Sudanese refugees have been a long-running problem for Egypt. The GOE provides no direct support for them, and while many eke out a life in Cairo, some seek a better life in nearby Israel. The issue turned violent in December 2005, when Egyptian police forcibly dispersed a make-shift encampment of Sudanese refugees in central Cairo, killing nearly 30 (reftel).

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